

**May 17, 2006**



## **Providence man admits gun possession**

**Jamal Northup**, 26, of Providence, has pled guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm. Northup admitted that he had a gun in his possession in a Charles Street parking lot last November.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the guilty plea, which Northup entered on May 12 before U.S. District Court Judge Mary M. Lisi in U.S. District Court, Providence.

At the plea hearing, Assistant U.S. Attorney Peter F. Neronha said that, on November 3, Gun Task Force officers observed several men, including Northup, in a parking lot outside 615 Charles Street. Acting on information that they had received about Northup, they detained him as he started to walk away from the group. During a pat-down, one of the officers pulled a loaded nine-millimeter pistol, wrapped in a white sock, out of Northup's front pants pocket.

Northup's guilty plea followed an unsuccessful bid to have Judge Lisi suppress the seizure of the gun. Northup claimed that the police officers did not have sufficient reason to stop him. But Judge Lisi denied the suppression motion, finding, as the government had argued, that the circumstances provided adequate reason for the officers to briefly detain Northup and to conduct a pat-down search.

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Northup has prior felony convictions, including a state conviction in 2000 for drug trafficking. Federal law prohibits a previously convicted felon from possessing firearms.

Northup is detained pending sentencing, which is scheduled for August 4.

Providence Police and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Neronha is prosecuting it federally as part of **Project Safe Neighborhoods**, a Department of Justice initiative against gun crimes. Under Project Safe Neighborhoods, the U.S. Attorney's Office, working with Providence Police, ATF, the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, and other agencies, aggressively prosecutes federal firearms offenses in an effort to incarcerate those responsible for gun violence and deter others from committing gun crimes. Since 2001, federal firearms prosecutions in Rhode Island have more than doubled and gun offenders have been sentenced to a total of more than 700 years in federal prison.

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